

(APPROVED)



Town of Plaistow - Highway Safety Committee
145 Main Street, Plaistow, NH 03865

PLAISTOW HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

MEETING DATE – Friday, September 12, 2014

PRESENT – Interim Chief Kathleen Jones, *Chairman*; Chief John McArdle, *Vice-Chairman*; Sean Fitzgerald, *Town Manager*; Michael Dorman, *Building Inspector*; Dan Garlington, *Highway Department Supervisor*; Leigh Komornick, *Town Planner*; Dan Poliquin, *Selectman Representative*; Michelle Auger, *Pollard School Principal*; Richard Latham, *Citizen's Representative*; Lisa Withee, *Citizen's Representative*; and Ernie Sheltry, *Citizen's Representative*

EXCUSED – None

ABSENT – None

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - 9:35 a.m.

MINUTES – M. Dorman motions to approve the minutes of June 6, 2014, seconded by E. Sheltry. No discussion. None opposed. All in favor but L. Withee, L. Komornick, D. Garlington, and M. Auger who all abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT- None

NEW BUSINESS –

Interim Police Chief Kathleen Jones introduces herself to the Committee as current Chairman and welcomes also Todd Clark and Steven Haas of Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc. who are present to discuss the Safe Routes to School project.

NEW BUSINESS – Review several sample charts of data that are obtained from the 2 radar panels on Main Street and choose 1 or 2 of them that can be distributed to the Committee monthly.

K. Jones passes out packets of several options the radar units produce to review the data it collects. Suggest everyone review the samples so the Committee can discuss at the next meeting, which charts they'd like distributed monthly.

NEW BUSINESS (Not on Agenda) - Safe Routes to School Grant

L. Komornick speaks about the Safe Routes to School Grant she is working on for Main Street and how the radar statistics will help.

S. Fitzgerald informs the Committee that the Town is working with Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc. on the Safe Routes to School project and anticipates that this project will help make the Main Street/Elm Street intersection safer. Would like the Committee to offer suggestions and give concerns they may have to T. Clark and S. Haas today.

K. Jones informs everyone that the signs purchased through the Safe Routes to School Grant are in and the 2 permanent signs will be installed shortly. Mentions the lawn signs that were also purchased through the grant and suggests the Town create a lottery for any residents interested in placing them on their lawn.

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S. Fitzgerald would like to work with M. Auger, the PTO, and speak with the School District to come up with locations for the lawn signs. M. Auger believes there are strategic places the lawn signs should be placed.

Chief McArdle questions if the locations of where the lawn signs will be placed are driven by the school and suggests placing them in areas that the children walk and bike to school. K. Jones agrees. L. Komornick mentions that she'll be reviewing the Town map to help strategically plan the areas the lawn signs will be offered.

D. Garlington questions how many lawn signs they have? K. Jones states 50. S. Fitzgerald mentions that more signs can be ordered to distribute throughout the community without the Safe Routes to School logo. Stresses the need to get the lawn signs out soon and how he'd like to recognize the winner of the logo contest. M. Auger suggests posting one of the signs out front of the SAU.

L. Withee mentions how children ride their bikes to school on side roads like Forrest Street so the signs would be beneficial on those roads as well.

S. Fitzgerald would like to get a list of parents who are interested in the lawn signs. M. Auger offers to send a letter out to parents explaining the Town's plan to post the Safe Routes to School lawn signs strategically and that any interested parents should respond by giving their name and address to her that she'll turn over to the Town for consideration.

L. Komornick mentions the map she has of a 2 mile radius out from the Pollard School and how she'd like the lawn signs to stay within that radius.

D. Garlington questions how long the signs will be posted. S. Fitzgerald would like them taken down before winter and then placed back out in the spring. K. Jones suggests sending a letter out with the signs to explain this and also ask anyone no longer interested in having a sign to return it to the Town Hall.

R. Latham suggests purchasing a 3rd permanent sign to place on Elm Street, which could potentially help with truck traffic that's increased heavily over the past few years. K. Jones asks if the Town can afford a 3rd sign through the Grant. L. Komornick confirms the Town can. R. Latham suggests posting the 3rd sign near the intersection of Palmer Avenue and Elm Street. S. Fitzgerald suggests the 3rd sign be double-sided.

T. Clark speaks to the Committee about the Safe Routes to School project along with a second grant the Town is applying for called, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and how he'd like to get input from the Committee before starting the engineering phase.

S. Fitzgerald mentions the firm's presentation to the Board of Selectmen and the Peterborough project they completed. T. Clark briefs the Committee on the project his firm completed on a narrow road that runs thru the recreation area of Peterborough, explaining how they tailored the road to the Town's needs and wants. S. Haas further mentions the Peterborough project and traffic calming they utilized such as landscaping, speed bumps, raised crosswalks, and signs, which now provide a gateway into Town. S. Fitzgerald mentions how some ideas implemented for Peterborough could potentially work well for Plaistow.

T. Clark explains how you need to give drivers a sense of what type of road they're traveling on. L. Withee questions how to make crosswalks more effective. T. Clark explains how reducing the exposure helps. S. Fitzgerald speaks about enforcement at crosswalks.

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D. Poliquin questions if it's been determined yet how far south and north the project will run along Main Street. S. Haas mentions that Phase 1, which is from the preliminary engineering submitted in the Safe Routes to School Grant application, is from Park Avenue to south of Pollard School.

R. Latham questions the data sheets from the radar units on Main Street. K. Jones explains the collection of data. S. Fitzgerald questions if it can help with enforcement. K. Jones explains how it shows days and times when speed increases, which can then be used for speed enforcement patrols. S. Fitzgerald questions if the data has been shared with patrol? K. Jones explains that it will be shared once the Committee decides on what reports they would like to have each month, so everyone has the same reports.

Chief McArdle mentions how the Town needs to change the culture of the area and keep in mind how kids don't always pay attention when crossing roadways. S. Haas speaks about the low visibility of pedestrians in the Village District.

Chief McArdle explains his concern regarding the fire department's apparatus located on Elm Street and the need to consider the fire trucks when looking at reconfiguring the intersection of Elm Street and Main Street. Stresses how 60-70% of their fire calls have them entering onto Main Street from Elm Street.

D. Poliquin mentions the pitch in the roadway coming from Elm Street onto Main Street.

S. Haas asks if the fire department's had any issues since the closure of the slip lane returning back onto Elm Street. Chief McArdle explains how they don't because they are typically returning to the department from a call and not going to an emergency call.

D. Poliquin mentions that since the closure of the slip lane, traffic has not slowed down entering Elm Street. Also comments on his observation of an increased rate of close calls from when a car is turning right onto Elm Street from Main Street and at the same time another car is taking a right from Elm Street onto Main Street.

S. Haas would like to slow drivers down before the intersection. S. Fitzgerald mentions that the intersection is currently considered a "slip lane corner". Suggests the Committee see the traffic model presentation that Hoyle, Tanner & Associates previously showed the Board of Selectmen. T. Clark mentions how the drivers already know how fast they can take the turn onto Elm Street, which is a behavior that needs to change.

R. Latham briefly mentions the signs he used over the summer that the crossing guards use at the schools and how the blue flashing light on it seemed to have slowed traffic down at the crosswalks. Suggests using them next year for the Town's concerts on the green.

L. Komornick mentions the timeline for the project. T. Clark explains that they need to complete the (TAP) grant application and would like to speak with the Town in regards to the Safe Routes to School project regarding its timeline. S. Fitzgerald mentions how he spoke with the Board of Selectmen previously about this and will speak with them again. Briefly mentions the amount of work and studies already completed for the project.

L. Komornick explains that Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc. will be interviewing several department heads. S. Fitzgerald mentions that abutters will need to be notified and invited to a public meeting. He will speak with the Board of Selectmen on Monday night to discuss how they want to kick start this project.

D. Garlington reminds everyone to keep in mind snow removal when working on the project. S. Haas mentions that he'll speak with NH DOT regarding this since it's a State road.

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D. Poliquin briefly comments how signs in the crosswalk do help calm traffic but can't always be used crosswalks such as the one next to Elm Street due to the turn radius when coming onto Main Street.

OLD BUSINESS – Continue discussion on options for South Main Street to control truck traffic entering northbound onto Main Street from Route 125

K. Jones will place this matter on the next Agenda as they are limited for time today.

OTHER BUSINESS –

L. Withee briefly mentions that the issues with the trash and barrels continue. D. Poliquin explains that JRM Trash Removal will be attending the Board of Selectmen meeting on September 22nd to discuss these issues. Explains how the Town has compiled a list of complaints regarding them, which they'll discuss with them on the 22nd. K. Jones explains that the Committee should have an update on this matter at the next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS –

M. Auger briefly asks if speed over 30 mph is considered a violation on the radar units data. K. Jones explains it is, as it collects everything over 30 mph as a violation. Reiterates that she'd like everyone to review the data before the next meeting and if there are any questions to give her a call. Mentions that she once had the units collect data starting at 35 mph, but it was requested by the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen to collect data of everything over 30 mph. L. Komornick suggests having Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc., review the software for the radar units as some information on it might be useful to them on the Safe Routes to School project.

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn by Chief McArdle and seconded by L. Komornick. Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m. None opposed – all in favor.

NEXT MEETING DATE – TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Gibbs,
Recording Secretary